



March, 2006

# ***FSA News***

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**Gary Fair, CED**

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## **RETIREMENT TIME IS HERE**

After serving almost 30 years as the County Executive Director in Sumner County and 12 years as the CED in Pottawatomie County Kansas, I have decided it is time to retire. Linda and I found out many years ago



that Sumner County was a great place to live, raise a family and work with producers that are actively involved in production agriculture. Over the years we have seen dramatic changes for Sumner County from producing primarily only wheat to now leading the State in not only Wheat acres, but Milo acres and Cotton Acres as well.

I will always cherish the memories of the talented and friendly staff I have had the pleasure to work with over the years. I appreciate having served under many hard working and dedicated county committee members. The real pleasure of this job has been in sharing the opportunity to administer USDA farm programs with a great staff for the Sumner County farm operators and the land owners scattered across the Nation.

You are invited to attend a come and go reception hosted by the Sumner Co. FSA staff on Thursday, March 30, 2006, from 9:00 until 3:00. My last official day of work will be Monday, April 3, 2006.

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## **PROGRAM ENROLLMENT WELL UNDERWAY**

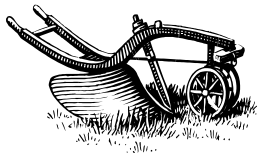
Just over 1,800 farms of the total 2,625 have been enrolled in the 2006 Direct and Counter Cyclical Program (DCP) to date. With less than 3 months left until the final enrollment date of June 1, we still need many producers to contact the county office and set an appointment to complete their program sign-up. At enrollment time, producers are eligible to request advance payments of 40% of the program payments for the year. The remaining portion of the payment will be issued after October 1. The county office has issued advance payments totaling \$2,675,677 as of March 1. Producers may enroll their farms from their home computers provided they have accessed the FSA website and had their level 2 access confirmed at any county FSA office. At last count 127 farms have been enrolled by producers from their home computers.

## **ACREAGE CERTIFICATIONS NEEDED**

The final date for producers to certify their fall seeded small grains, (wheat, barley, etc.) is May 31, 2006. All farms participating in the DCP program and/or the CRP program are required to report acreages. To date only 33% of the farms have been certified. At this point producers have reported seeding 143,712 acres of wheat in the county. We anticipate the 2006 wheat acreage in the county will exceed the 2005 total acreage of 366,155 acres. With a limited staff, appointment times are filling up fast. Contact the county office and make an appointment if you enrolled your farm earlier in the sign-up period and didn't certify crop acreages at that time. Generally, producers are doing both, the enrollment and the certification from now until the end of the enrollment period.

## **NEW COUNTY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Voters in the west 1/3 of the county elected Duane Nulik of rural Caldwell to fill the vacancy on the county committee. Duane replaces Joe Slechta who has served the maximum 9 years on the committee. We appreciate all the hard work and grass roots input that Joe contributed over the years. Joan Robare has resigned as the advisor to the committee having served 7 years and prior to her appointment also served on the community committee and as an alternate to the county committee. Joan's many contributions are greatly appreciated. Marlene Rieckenberg was nominated by the Sumner County Committee to fill the position of advisor which has now been confirmed by the Kansas State FSA committee which was effective on March 1.



## **PLEASE REPORT CHANGES**

Each time we issue a county wide newsletter or the State office mails a State wide letter we get many of them returned because address changes have not been reported. The same is true of direct deposits, they are returned to our office if you have not reported a change of your bank or just changed account numbers. In both cases it causes delays. We also need to keep informed of changes of land ownership and changes in farm operators. Thanks for your help in these matters.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14<sup>th</sup> and Independence Ave, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

## **CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM**

Many producers expressed an interest in the CRP practice that provided field borders for upland game habitat. Sumner County producers have enrolled approximately 850 acres on 64 contracts for the benefit of quail and pheasants. The State allocation of 20,000 acres for wildlife habitat has been exhausted; however sources tell us that additional acres may someday be released from Washington so that additional contracts could be approved. USDA has announced that a general CRP signup will be held starting March 27 and running thru April 14, 2006. Producers will be able to make offers for CRP's competitive general signup at our office. Offers will be submitted to Washington for evaluation on land that has a scoring of the environmental index (EI) greater than 8. The environmental factors that will be considered are wind and water erosion, wildlife, air quality and other enduring benefits.